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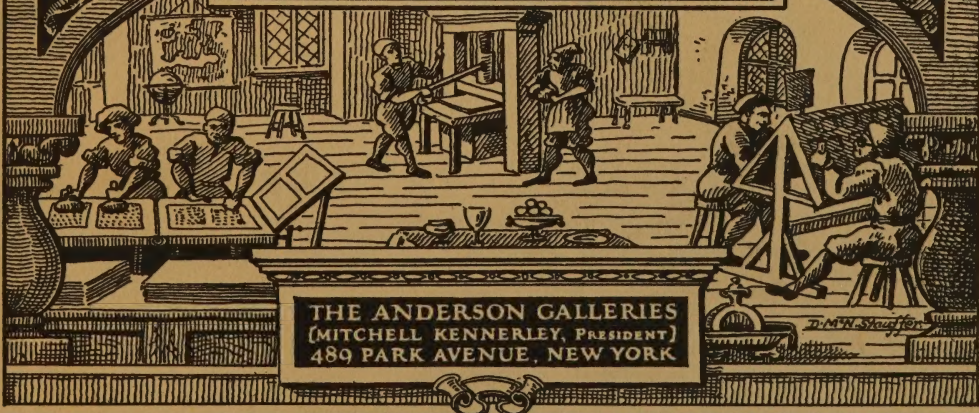
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7 50

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17 50

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[SEE ILLUSTRATION]

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Paris, 1886

15 00

One of 300 copies on Holland paper.

The Original and Growth of PRINTING.

Concerning the Time of bringing this Excellent ART into England, and by whose Expence and Procurement it was brought; Modern Writers of good Reputation do most Erroniously agree together. Mr. *Stow*, in his *Survey of London*, speaking of the 37th year of Henry the sixth his reign, which was in 1456. faith, That the Noble Science of PRINTING was about this time found in Germany at Mentz, by John Gutenberg a Knight, And that William Caxton of London Mercer, brought it into England about 1471. And first practised the same in the Abby of St. Peter at Westminster, With whom Sir Rich. Baker in his Chronicle agrees throughout. And Mr. *Honell* in his *Historical Discourse of London and Westminster*, agrees with both the former in the Time, Person, and Place in general; but more particularly declares the place in Westminster to be the Almshouse there; And that *Jstip* Abbot of Westminster set up the first Press of Book-Printing that ever was in England. These three famous Historians having filled the World with the supposed truth of this Assertion, (Although possibly it might arise through the mistake of the first Writer only, whose Memory I perfectly honour) makes it the harder Task upon me to undecieve the World again: Nor would I undertake this Work, but under a double notion; As I am a Friend to Truth, and so it is unfit to suffer one Man to be intitled to the worthy Achievements of another. And as a Friend to my self, not to lose one of my best Arguments of Intitling the King to this ART in his private Capacity.

Historians must of necessity take many things upon trust, they cannot with their own but with the Eyes of others see what things were done before they themselves were, *Bernardus non videt omnia*; 'Tis not then impossible they should mistake. I shall now make it appear they have done so from their Own, as well as from other Arguments: Mr. *Stow*'s Expressions are very dubious, and the matter express very Improbable; He faith PRINTING was found in Mentz, which presupposes it was practised some where else before, and lost: And further, That 'twas found in the Reign of Henry the sixth, in 1456. and not brought into England till Eleven years in the succeeding Reign of Edward the Fourth, being twelve years after, as if it had been lost again. If this be true, there was as little Rarity as Expedition in obtaining it, the age of twelve years time having intervened, and so indeed it might be the Act of a Mercer rather than a more eminent Person: But when I consider what great advantage the Kingdom in general receives by it, I could not but think a publick Person and a publick Purse must needs be concerned in so publick a Good. The more I Considered of this, the more inquisitive I was to find out the truth of it: At last, a Book came to my hands Printed at Oxford, in 1468, which was three years before any of the recited Authors would allow it to be in England, which gave me some reward for my Curiosity, and encouragement to proceed further: And in prosecution of this Discovery, the same most worthy Person who trusted me with the aforesaid Book, did also present me with the Copy of a Record and Manuscript in *Lambeth-House*, heretofore in his Custody, belonging to the See, (and not to any particular Arch-Bishop of Canterbury) the Substance whereof was this, (though I hope, for publick satisfaction, the Record it self, in its due time, will appear.)

Thomas Bowcher, Arch-Bishop of Canterbury, moved the then King Henry the Sixth, to use all possible means for procuring a Printing-Mold, (for so 'twas there called) to be brought into this Kingdom; the King (a good Man, and much given to Works of this nature) readily hearkned to the Motion; and taking private Advice, how to effect His Design, concluded it could not be brought about without great Secrecy, and a considerable Sum of Money given to such Person or Persons, as would draw off some of the Work-men from *Harlem in Holland*, where John Gutenberg had newly invented it, and was himself personally at Work: 'Twas Resolv'd, that lets then one Thousand Marks would not produce the desired Effect: Towards which Sum, the said Arch-Bishop presented the King with Three Hundred Marks. The Money being now prepared, the Management of the Design was committed to Mr. Robert Turnour, who then was of the Robes to the King, and a Person most in Favour with Him, of any of his Condition: Mr. Turnour took to his Affluence Mr. Caxton, a Citizen of good Abilities, who Trading much into Holland, might be a Creditable Pretence, as well for his going, as stay in the Low-Countries: Mr. Turnour was in Disguise (his Beard and Hair shaven quite off) but Mr. Caxton appeared known and publick. They having received the said Sum of One Thousand Marks, went first to *Amsterdam*, then to *Leyden*, not daring to enter *Harlem* it self, for the Town was very jealous, having imprisoned and apprehended divers Persons, who came from other Parts for the same purpose: They staid till they had spent the whole One Thousand Marks in Gifts and Expences: So as the King was faine to send Five Hundred Marks more, Mr. Turnour having written to the King, that he had almost done his Work; a Bargain (as he said) being struck betwixt him and two *Hollanders*, for bringing off one of the Work-Men, who should sufficiently Discover and Teach this New Art: At last, with much ado, they got off one of the Under-Workmen, whose Name was Frederick Corfellus, who late

one Night stole from his Fellows in Disguise, into a Vessel prepared for that purpose; and so the Wind (favouring the Design) brought him safe to London.

'Twas not thought so prudent, to fet him on Work at London, (but by the Arch-Bishops means, who had been Vice-Chancellor, and afterwards Chancellor of the University of Oxford,) Corfellus was carryed with a Guard to Oxford; which Guard constantly watch'd, to prevent Corfellus from any possible Escape, till he had made good his promise in Teaching how to Print: So that at Oxford Printing was first fet up in England, which was before there was any Printing-Press, or Printer, in France, Spain, Italy, or Germany, (except the City of Mentz,) which claims Seniority, as to Printing, even of *Harlem* it self, calling her City, *Urben Moguntiana Artis Typographicæ Inventricem primam*, though 'tis known to be otherwise, that City gaining that Art by the Brother of one of the Workmen of *Harlem*, who had learnt it at Home of his Brother, and after let up for himself at Mentz.

This Press at Oxford was at least ten years before there was any Printing in Europe (except at *Harlem*, and *Mentz*) where 'till it was but new born. This Press at Oxford, was afterwards found inconvenient, to be the sole Printing-place of England, as being too far from London, and the Sea: Whereupon the King let up a Press at St. Albans, and another in the Abby of Westminster, where they Printed several Books of Divinity and Physick, for the King, (for Reasons best known to himself and Council) permitted them no Law-Books to be Printed; nor did any Printer Exercise that ART, but only such as were the Kings sworn Servants; the King himself having the Price and Emolument for Printing Books: Printing thus brought into England, was most Graciously Received by the King, and most Cordially Entertained by the Church, the Printers having the Honour to be sworn the Kings Servants, and the Favour to Lodge in the very Boom of the Church; as in Westminster, St. Albans, Oxford, &c. By this means the ART grew so famous, that *Anno prim. Rich. 3. cap. 9.* when an Act of Parliament was made for the Reburial of Aliens, from using any Handicrafts here, except as Servants to Natives, a special *Proviso* was inserted, that Strangers might bring in Printed or Written Books, to sell at their pleasure, and Exercise the ART of Printing here, notwithstanding that Act: So that in the space of 40 or 50 years, by the special Industry and assistance of Edward the Fourth, Edward the Fifth, Richard the Third, Henry the Seventh, and Henry the Eighth, the English prov'd so good Proficients in Printing, and grew so numerous, as to furnish the Kingdom with Books; and so skillful, as to Print them as well as any beyond the Seas, as appears by the Act of the 24 Hen. 8. cap. 15. which Abrogates the said *Proviso* for that Reason. And it was further Enacted in the said Statute, that if any person bought Forreign books Bound, he should pay 6s. 8d. per Book, &c.

But Printing became now so dangerous to the Commonwealth, That there were more Books Burnt in Ten years, then could be Printed in Twenty: So that it Concernd the Prince altogether as much to suppress the Abuse, as it did before to Obtain the Use of Printing: And had there not been a Reserve of Licensing such Books as should be Printed still remaining in the Crown, they might have published the wickedness of their own Imaginations with Authority. But Queen Elizabeth at her very first Entrance to the Crown, finding so great Disorders in Church and State, by reason of the Abuse in Printing, Secures in the first place the Law, and the Order, of both which the Kings and Queens of England have Inherent Right as Heads of the Church, and Supream of the Law; and not only in their publick, but private Capacity, as Proprietors, the Power and Signiory of this, under Favour, cannot be severed from the Crown: The Kings being the Trustees of the People, who have formerly taken an Oath at their Coronation, That they shall keep all the Lands, Honours, and Dignities, Rights, and Freedoms of the Crown of England, in all manner whole without any manner of diminution, and the Right of the Crown, hurt, decay'd, or lost, to their Power shall call again into the Ancient Estate Which Oath, the said Queen kept inviolably, and liv'd the more quietly for it all the time of her Reigne, and died in Peace. True it is, they may, and do gratifie their Friends and Servants, in giving them the Emoluments and Profits that arise from Printing; but the Power they cannot alienate from the Crown, without losing the most precious Stone out of their Diadem. To shew you some Example for all: The said Queen, the first Year of her Reigne, grants by Patent the Priviledge of sole Printing all Books, that touch or concern the Common-Laws of England, to Tottel a Servant to her Majesty, who kept it intire to his Death: After him, to one *Telford*, another Servant to Her Majesty: After him, to one *Wright and Norton*, and after them, King James grants the same Priviledge to *Mory*, one of His Majesties Clerks of the Signet; which Grant continues to this Day; and so for the Bible, the Statute-Laws, the Book of Common-Prayer, Proclamations, as much as the Grammer, the Primer, &c. are all granted by Kings and Queens, not only to gratifie their Friends and Servants, but to preserve the Legal Power and Authority of the Root, and thier Books from being Corrupted.

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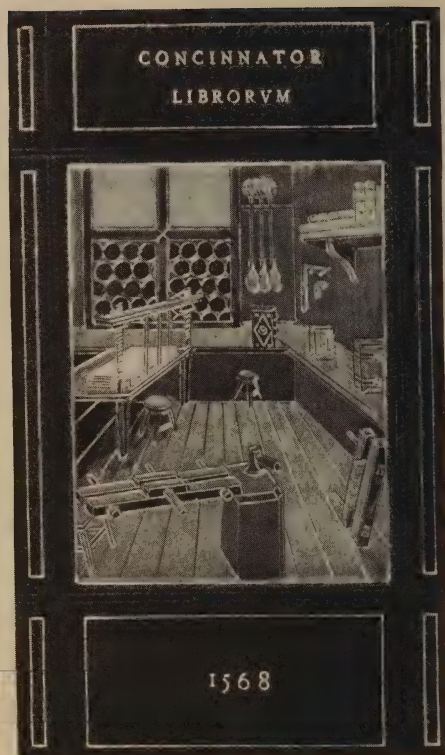
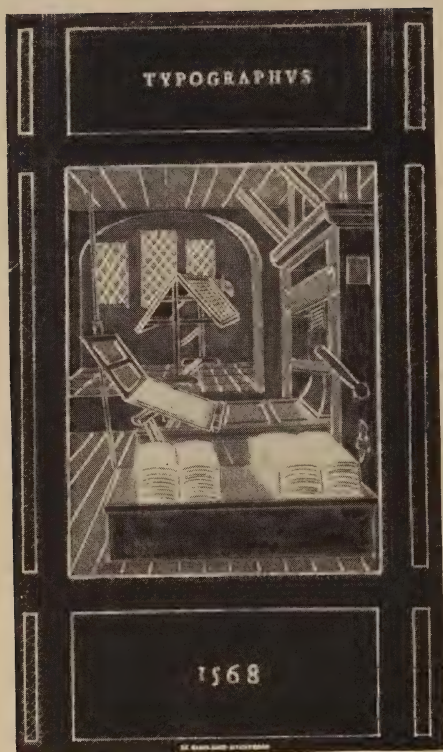
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